Observation:

1. Pennsylvania Youth Chorale.

For the entirety of the 2011-12 school year I have been working as a rehearsal assistant to the Pennsylvania Youth Chorale (PYC). As an assistant my tasks have been varied. I help during the rehearsal, listening to the choir, helping a section sing their part, and keeping order. I have also been called on to lead warm- ups and sectionals. In the sectionals, I teach new material to a particular section, listening and correcting pitches, rhythm, diction, languages, or supervising as a section leader rehearses the group.

My time spent working with the choir has also allowed me to observe an outstanding chorale and their director, Ms. Finley. These experiences have given me a vision for working with choirs in the future. While I have gleaned many specific ideas – warm-ups, conducting skills, teaching new material, running a private choir, creating motivation, and discipline one of the greatest lessons I have learned is to expect great things of my students to teach them more than music and musicianship. Ms. Finley has monumental standards for her students. She is always expecting more of them. She praises them for their excellence, but will not stand for anything less. And they rise to her standard, striving for excellence. Today there is so little challenge placed before students and I firmly believe they want to excel, but need help and guidance in getting there. Furthermore, Ms. Finley teaches them values beyond musicianship. She teaches discipline, professionalism, courtesy, manners, and teamwork. These children leave her as well rounded people and musicians. They learn life-skills that far out-live her classroom. I want to take that challenge and give the same values and musicianship to my students.